# What Is In A Song? Constructions of Hegemonic Masculinity by Zimbabwean Football Fans

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## Abstract

Hegemonic masculinity is defined as the most 'honoured' way of being a man, requiring all men to try to meet its standards. It may be encountered randomly, sometimes at such dispersed, everyday sites as sporting events. This article explores the authors' ethnographic encounters with hegemonic masculinities amongst football fans in Zimbabwe, particularly in the songs they sing. Utilising Raewyn Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity, the article argues that Zimbabwean football fandom is tangled with hegemonic masculinities. The article demonstrates a simultaneously covert and subtle, but always complex, relationship between football fandom and masculinities, specifically hegemonic masculinity. The study's major conclusion is that hegemonic masculinity is strongly discursive and occasionally occurs even in the seemingly most harmless mundane banter such as stadia songs. Despite the sometimes jovial nature of these performances, there are power undercurrents involved.

**Key words**: **Football, stadia songs, Hegemonic masculinity, Heteronormativity, Heterosexuality, virility, Zimbabwe**

## Introduction

This study demonstrates a covert and subtle, but always complex, relationship between football fandom songs and hegemonic masculinity in Zimbabwe. Largely credited to Australian theorist Raewyn Connell (1987,1995, 2012), hegemonic masculinity is defined as 'the currently most

honoured way of being a man' which requires all men to meet its standards (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, 832). Expectations of hegemonic masculinity differ across, time, space and cultures and can be contested by other alternative masculinities (Connell 2005). Hegemonic masculinity can also be defined as 'the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women' (Connell 1995, 77). We show that hegemonic masculinity is omnipresent in sporting events especially football. As Spandler and McKeown (2012,392) argue, 'football is a primary space where gender is performed-not where men are men, but where men "do" (or don't do) "being male".'

Substantial literature shows that sports fandom remains a masculine area resisting shifting gender relations **(**Gruneau and Whitson 1993; Gee 2009; Tjønndal 2016), where men can still perform and celebrate ideological versions of aggressive masculinity (Gruneau and Whitson 1993; Gee 2009). In essence, the less acceptable sexism has become in society, the more it is concentrated in particular sports as one of the 'last bastions' of male domination (Messner 2007; Hearn 2012). Football therefore, acts as a means not only to reassert, but also to reconfigure, dominant gender relationships and hegemonic masculinity (Spandler and McKeown 2012). Masculinities, therefore, arise within the context of the dominant gender orders present at any given moment in every society (Connell 2012; Hasan, Peteraggleton and Persson 2015). Gender is a 'social practice that constantly refers to bodies and what bodies do, it is not social practice reduced to the body' (Connell 2005,71).'

This article is a product of the authors' three-year stadia ethnographic encounters with hegemonic masculinity amongst football fans in Zimbabwe, particularly in the songs they sing. We argue that football fandom songs are ready sites where power aspirations (including in the area of gender and sexuality) are expressed. They are sites where dominance is resented and challenged (Chirwa 2001). Thus these songs are not limited to social solidarity, and neither are they confined to cheering athletes on the pitch. Popular culture scholars (Grossberg 1997; Hall, 1997; Dolby 2006) assert that it is in the realm of popular culture where negotiation of race, gender, nation and other social identities and the play of power take place. This paper demonstrates that Zimbabwe football stadia songs, just like other popular music genres across the world (see Ramirez 2012; Clawson 1999; Cohen 1997), are interwoven with masculinity discourses at any given time. We show that these songs are not monolithic but multiple and even contradictory, reflecting multiple perspectives to masculinities. Though there are various aspects of masculinity (Connell 1995), we are primarily interested in hegemonic masculinity, showing its intimacy with heteronormativity and heterosexuality discourses. We embrace earlier assertions in fandom studies that 'football operates as a contested territory where spatial arrangements of domination are produced, maintained (and sometimes resisted) through sports-specific practices such as 'chanting' (Caudwell 2011) and 'football talk' (Nylund 2004) cited in (Spandler and McKeown 2012,392). While masculinities are also rife in chanted slogans and banter, for feasibility purposes we limit our analysis to songs.

The article is organised in five sections. The section below provides a brief overview on football fandom and the gender regime in Zimbabwe. A theoretical section focusing on Connell's (1987, 1995, 2012) concept of hegemonic masculinity follows, locating the study in such a discussion.

From theoretical framework, the article then presents a literature review section, showing how this study goes beyond previous research. A methodology section briefly discussing the authors' ethnographic approach then follows. Findings are then presented thematically in two separate sections. The conclusion then shows how the current study complements existing studies on sport, songs and masculinities in Africa.

**Football fandom and the gender regime in Zimbabwe**

There is a scarcity of studies exploring intersections of football fandom and gender in Zimbabwe. This article focuses on male top tier football league- the Premier Soccer League (PSL) fandom. Growing literature on the subject shows that PSL football stadia such as Babourfields (Bulawayo), Gwanzura and Rufaro (Harare), are symbolic nodes which are highly female unfriendly (Daimon 2010; Ncube, McCracken and Engh 2013; Chiweshe 2014). Football fandom in Zimbabwe (see Chiweshe 2014), just like in most parts of the world (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005), is a patriarchal space defined by the reproduction of hegemonic masculinities. Such a trend confirms Spandler and McKeown's (2012) argument that football is male, masculine and manly.

Zimbabwe is a largely heteronormative society. Berlant and Warner (2000, 312) define heteronormativity as 'the institutions, structures of understanding and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent – that is, organised as a sexuality – but also privileged'. Anderson (2011) contends that heteronormativity is often utilised as a tool for hegemonic masculinity. We demonstrate this phenomenon by analysing selected football fandom songs in Zimbabwe, illustrating how heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity are conflated.

Chiweshe (2014) contends that in the past football stadiums were not considered 'rightful' places for morally 'upright' females. As such, these spaces are defined by masculine and misogynistic tendencies, making it a scary place for some women. However, in spite of the hostile stadia environment, Chiweshe's (2014) study on female fans' responses to the masculine and phallocentric nature of football stadiums in Zimbabwe shows that there has been a gradual increase on the number of female football fans consuming football in stadia. This is because female football fans in Zimbabwe have devised various ways of coping and 'taming' these hostile environments. Female fans either join or act like men or ignore and avoid parts of the stadium with singing male fans (Chiweshe 2014). While Chiweshe's (2014) study places female fans at the heart of interrogation, this study is an exploration of constructions of hegemonic masculinity by both male and female football fans in Zimbabwe. This subject deserves academic interrogation since it offers insights into the jocular performance of gender in public spaces. Despite the sometimes jovial nature of these performances, there are power undercurrents involved.

**Conceptual Framework**

Though masculinities have been theorised in various ways at different epochs, this article finds Connell's (1987, 1995, 2012, 2014) framework persuasive. Hegemonic masculinity has been extremely useful in gender and sports studies, emphasising the legitimating power of consent (rather than crude physical or political power) to ensure submission (Robertson 2007). The article utilises the hegemonic masculinity concept, which falls under Connell's gender order theory to discuss the construction and performance of masculinities in Zimbabwean football

fandom songs. Peled (2016) contends that from the early 1980s, a number of theorists made various propositions on masculinity, until Connell presented it in 1987 as a comprehensible theory. Connell, however, later jointly revised the theory with Messerschmidt (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Peled 2016). It is argued that Connell based her concept of hegemonic masculinity on Antonio Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony. Gramsci (1971) contends that the ruling class utilises cultural institutions such as the media and sport among others, to gain power and consensual control. Similarly, sport also functions as a strategic vehicle through which specific conceptions of gender are reproduced and manifested as commonsensical (Gee 2009). Sport becomes a site where 'men can still feel and express their superiority, as men: fans and players can smile or scream (even hug each other!) without any loss of masculine face' (Burton Nelson 1994, 115).

Hegemonic masculinity concept is grounded in the feminist perspectives of male social dominance and patriarchy (Connell 1987, 2012; Graham 2014; Peled 2016). From the concept, all men benefit from patriarchy (Connell 1995; Messner 2002; Anderson 2011). In essence, in a patriarchal society, women are generally placed in a subordinate position, and men tend to dominate the economy, business corporations, politics and the family. However, Connell (1987) argues that although men are structurally related to women in a superior position and inherently benefit from the patriarchal dividend, they do have a 'choice' about whether or not actively to occupy oppressive positions vis-à-vis women and other men or to resist these (Jewkes et al. 2015). This choice may be highly constrained due to a lack of exposure to other ideas and information, but it is ultimately still a choice (Jewkes et al. 2015). The articles explores how football fandom songs naturalise male dominance helping men to benefit from patriarchal dividends.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) argue that there can be more than one hegemonic masculinity within a society. For instance, working-class men in poor African countries cannot be could be regarded as 'hegemonic', as these men do not perceive themselves to be 'in power' (Jewkes et al 2015). Thus various masculinities are in existence at any given moment in society (Connell 1995). These include hegemonic masculinities, subordinated masculinities, marginalized masculinities, complicit masculinities and protest masculinities (Connell 2000, 30). The hierarchy of masculinities is an expression of the unequal shares in the privilege held by different groups of men (Connell 1996). Hegemonic masculinity is the most respected, desired, and dominant form of masculine identity for a given culture or subculture (Gee 2009). According to Connell (2005,77) hegemonic masculinity is 'the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women'. The current study is interested in exploring intersections of hegemonic masculinity and selected football fandom songs in Zimbabwe. The study explores how songs conflate hegemonic masculinity with heterosexuality and virility.

Hegemonic masculinity is an important analytical concept for identifying attitudes and practices among men that perpetuate gender inequality, involving both men's domination over women and the power of some men over other (often minority groups of) men (Jewkes et al 2015). However, the concept cannot be exonerated from criticism (Graham 2014; Francis 2014). Connell admits that hegemonic masculinity just like any other social identities, changes over time and across cultures **(**Connell and Messerschmidt 2005; Graham 2014). According to Connell (1995),

hegemonic masculinity is not permanent and is always prone to contestation at any given moment in society.

Importantly, the concept of masculinity/masculinities' is critiqued for historical specificity, ethnocentrism, false causality, psychologism, tendency towards philosophical idealism, reproduction of heterosexual dichotomies, and conceptual vagueness (Hearn 2012). In essence, hegemonic masculinity is seen as not existing in any pure form to be found empirically here and now: thus it is a concept based in hypothetical theorizing (Hearn 2012). The hegemonic is distinct from domination delivered directly and materially (Hearn 2012). Other critics also point out that hegemonic masculinity concept is not clear whether it refers to cultural aspirations, representations, everyday practices, or institutional structures (Whitehead 2002; Hearn 2012).

**Literature review**

There is a well-established body of literature across the world, especially in the United Kingdom, United States of America and Asia, showing the connection of sport and gender (Connell 1987; Messner 1992; Giulianotti 2002; Savedra 2003; Jones 2008). These works concur that sport is a masculine enterprise (Messner 1992; Connell 1995; Plummer 1999). Sport is a space where boys and men learn masculine values, relations, and rituals (Messner 1992; Pronger 1990). In essence, sexism is deep rooted in football, despite increasing levels of women playing and watching football (Sever 2005; Caudwell 2011; Spandler and McKeown 2012).

From the past, women were viewed as less authentic and committed fans who have no place in the 'imagined community' of fandom (Armstrong 1998; Giulianotti 2000). The world of the fan is organised around typically male oriented social spaces-pubs, bars and large-scale sports arenas. In such spaces, men are permitted to express their emotions and passions. Sport is an avenue for men to 'express their affection for men-and their anger at women-in a socially acceptable form' (Burton Nelson 1994, 120). Having women present, it is felt, can inhibit this sometimes unmanly behaviour (Mean 2001). This explains why sport is viewed as one of the last few strongholds where men can still assert their dominance and supremacy over women (Hong 2003; Mean 2001). The game provides space for the 'legitimate expression of hyper-masculinity' through various fandom activities which reinforce men's power over women (Gosling 2007:253).

Studies on football and gender in Zimbabwe (Daimon, 2010; Chikafa 2014; Chiweshe 2014; Ncube 2014) indicate that football fandom is masculine, as elsewhere. Daimon (2010) submits that dominant patriarchal ideology locates women's roles in the domestic sphere thus their participation is viewed as a challenge to male control of the public domain. Thus Zimbabwe's stadia have become arenas for the display of machismo resulting in most Zimbabwean women avoiding consuming matches in stadia (Daimon 2010). Chiweshe's (2014) study is more closely related to the current research. Chiweshe (2014) shows that women in Zimbabwe respond to masculine and misogynistic tendencies in football stadia. While Chiweshe's (2014) study is welcome, it is only limited to the analysis of female fans in Zimbabwean stadia and is not specifically confined to the analysis of stadia songs and their intersections with masculinities.

Building on previous research, this article utilises Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity to show how fandom songs are utilised to express hegemonic masculinity.

**Methodology**

We conducted an ethnographic research on intersections of football fandom songs and gender, specifically hegemonic masculinity in Zimbabwe's Premier Soccer League (PSL) from 2012-2015. Ethnography refers to a particular set of qualitative methods used in both cultural studies and the social sciences to learn about people's lives and elucidate certain cultural phenomena and meanings (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). Communities studied produce accounts of their world that are pertinent in explaining broader social and cultural topographies. Due to the phenomenon under investigation, this was an ethnography of corporeality (Wacquant 2004; Enriquez-Gibson 2016). It was critical for us to 'tell it as it is' as Geertz (1973) emphasizes regarding the need to understand from the local's point of view.

We were observer as participants in football stadia during the research process. Observant participation means active membership that encourages bodily immersion (Wacquant, 2004). We argue that the deployment of participant observation is a critical and fruitful methodology for researching hegemonic masculinity in Zimbabwean football fandom. However, participant observation calls for self-reflexivity to undo the researcher's bias (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983). This was also critical in our case as corporeal reflexivity was necessary. This refers to awareness of one's body as an experiencing subject and a physical object accessible to the gaze of others (Wacquant, 2004; Ochs 2015; Enriquez-Gibson 2016). Such corporeal displays may

evidence a willingness to consider and accommodate other's beliefs, that is, to enter into intersubjective relationships (Ochs 2015). However, recent approaches to ethnography argue against the possibility of 'unbiased' scholarship, and view reflexivity as 'a tool to enhance awareness of our situatedness and, subsequently, to be more receptive to perspectives that approach the world from a different position' (Saukko 2003,62).

We are aware of how our gender and sexuality could affect observation analysis, and interpretation of data. The first author is male while the second author is female. Our beliefs, background and experiences as Zimbabweans raised in a patriarchal society was bound to influence our interpretation of events. Moreover, our research sites (stadia) are sexist. Most of the songs and chants are misogynistic whilst the dances are sexually suggestive, which in a way denigrated the female researcher. Due to the 'hostile' nature of the terraces, female researcher was at first terrified to be alone, fearing molestation by 'hooligans'. But with time, she became used and comfortable in the terraces. The combination of a male and female researcher worked to our advantage during the research process. DeWalt and DeWalt (2002) assert that male and female researchers have access to different information, as they have access to different people, settings, and bodies of knowledge. We tried our best to minimise bias in the interpretation of observations since it could prejudice this narrative.

Having been granted consent by the Zimbabwe Football Association (ZIFA), the formal 'gatekeepers' of football in Zimbabwe, we embarked on fieldwork in April 2012. For the three-year period, stadiums namely: Babourfields (Bulawayo), Mandava (Zvishavane), Rufaro and National Sports Stadium (both Harare), constituted our key research sites.

Due to our prior knowledge we knew high profile matches especially involving Zimbabwe's biggest three PSL teams Dynamos FC, Highlanders FC and CAPS United would provide rich data. This is because of the rivalry existent between these clubs and also their huge fan base. Giulianotti (2004) contends that a stadium is a cauldron of emotion where the researcher experiences ecstatic moments. Indeed, we had our thrilling moments in the research sites-stadia. Being passionate football fans ourselves, we found the research experience both exciting and insightful. We attended a total of 34 PSL matches from 2012-2015.

We participated in the singing, dancing and chanting, as a way of immersing with participants. However, we refrained from illegal activities such as violence against other fans, police and referees. Though stadium rituals such as chants, discussions, among others are intertwined with masculinities, for feasibility purposes we confined our analysis to songs. We used our mobile phones to record most of the 'relevant' songs for analysis. We also captured some of the dances for analysis. This is because fandom songs and dances are contextual. Some of the songs are shaped by specific events on the pitch or terraces hence if not captured at that particular moment, there is not guarantee that they will be repeated in the future.

More than 20 songs deemed relevant to the research were captured, but not all the songs were analysed for the purpose of the study. These songs are explicitly vulgar. Mbembe (2001) contends that vulgarity is an expression of power. Purposive sampling was used to select songs for analysis. Purposive sampling is simply selecting groups or categories to study on the basis of their relevance to the research questions and the theoretical position and most importantly the

explanation or account which one is developing (Yin 2011). Lyrics of the songs are analysed in relation to the broader socio-political gender context. Thematic and qualitative content analysis were used to analyse the selected songs. The songs are in Shona but we translate the lyrics to English for accessibility by a diverse audience. We however, admit that at times 'original' meaning is lost during the translation process. Findings are presented in two separate themes below. The first theme shows how stadia songs and chants emphasise on virility as a tool for enforcing hegemonic masculinity. The second theme demonstrates how songs and chants vilify female fans, labelling them prostitutes.

**Heterosexuality and Virility as bases of hegemonic masculinity**

Fandom songs cover a range of themes from gender, sexuality, religion and politics. In most cases, the songs are sung in vernacular languages-Shona and Ndebele (by Highlanders FC fans). Vulgarity is the dominant medium of expression and it appears to be the norm. However, the composition of these songs is not clear and obvious. One cannot exactly claim with certainty that certain songs are composed and sung by men while others are composed and sung by women. There are no instances where men and women sit apart to the point where it may be easily discernible that a song is sung by female fans and not male fans. It is beyond the scope of this article to attribute any songs to a specific gender. The article is only restricted to the analysis of the songs in relation to hegemonic masculinity.

The songs blend gospel lyrics, funeral choruses, political songs and lyrics from recorded popular music genres such as Urban grooves and Zimbabwe Dancehall. Fans appropriate and repurpose

these songs/lyrics to suit their intentions, albeit in humorous ways. For example, Christianity choruses such as '*Danga rehwai dzenyu mambo imwe yacho yarasika* (God, a sheep has strayed from your herd), common at funeral gatherings, is appropriated and bastardised to '*Dongoregwai mhai makaresva kugara* (mum if you don't sit properly, don't cry foul when men peep at your private parts). Zimbabwean gospel musician Fungisai Zvakavapano-Masvavave's popular song '*Tiende kudenga* (let us go to heaven) is converted to '*Jende mudenga* (balls/testicles in air).

Often, both men and women take a leading role in the singing and dancing at the terraces, but men generally outnumber their female counterparts. It is however, problematic to say the men who sing during matches all belong to the 'class' of hegemonic masculinity. Not everyone amongst these men have power, wealth, physical strength ambition, but merely aspire towards these. Perhaps only a minority of men meet the standards of hegemonic masculinity while the majority aspire towards it or associate themselves with it. Attending a football match and singing during the game does not make one to belong to hegemonic masculinity 'class'. Merely singing in praise of male dominance does not make one dominant. It makes one complicit to hegemonic masculinity (complicit masculinity). As argued by Connell and Messerschmidt (2005, 849), while hegemonic masculinity is often seen as a 'configuration of gender practice', it is sometimes presented as a cultural ideal or an aspiration that only limited numbers of men can practise or even can never be fulfilled. In fact, some of the men who regularly attend matches are ma*hwindi* (touts), vendors, among others. However, through songs, these men express a desire for hegemonic masculinity.

Most analysed songs conflate masculinity with heterosexuality and virility. Such songs express heterosexuality and virility as the salient features of being a 'man'. For example, the song Emma

below shows the nexus of hegemonic masculinity, heteronormativity and heterosexuality. Fans sing:

> *Emma anongondishainira Emma* (Emma contempts me)
>
> *Ndichangomusvira chete Emma* (I swear I will fuck her)
>
> *Emma Emma Ema* (Emma Emma Emma)

In the song, a woman Emma is accused of despising a man, contradicting the 'natural' gender order in heteronormative societies like Zimbabwe. Brown (2015) contends that hetero-normative masculine discourse is a belief that normalises and shapes many heterosexual relationships where a man's role in the relationship is dominant, which is closely tied to his sense of masculinity, commonly confirmed by his sexual prowess. Thus from the song, being virile and having sexual intercourse with Emma, is not only a way of clamouring for hegemonic masculinity but also ensuring that she behaves in a feminine way and accepts male dominance. Hegemonic masculinity is enforced through demonstration of virility (Hunter 2005; Stern and Buikema 2013; Graham 2014).Whitehead (2002) assert that masculinity is connected to dominance and the sexual act of intercourse with women seen as symbolic and a powerful confirmation of this connection. This may explain why in the song Emma; the man openly brags *Ndichangomusvira chete Ema* (I swear I will fuck Emma).

It is also plausible to consider the view that '*kushainira*' (despising) reflects a common perception by men that women who reject their advances (sexual included) are unnecessarily proud and present a challenge to men who feel they have to 'win' what they now see as a contest at all costs. '*Ndichangomusvira* chete' may in that regard symbolise conquest, violent or otherwise.

While sexual intercourse is for pleasure or procreation, the man seems not to care if Emma is consenting to sexual intercourse. What drives the man is the desire to show sexual prowess as a way of performing hegemonic masculinity. In a way, the song Emma is about rape. Rape has been deployed to exercise dominance over female bodies. For example, in formerly Yugoslavia (see Mostov 2000), in the midst of the war, women became rape victims because soldiers believed that this was the best way to humiliate the men on the other side. Rape was a way for men to communicate with other men. In a way, soldiers who instigated mass rapes were not motivated by the desire to attain sexual gratification or pleasure but to invade into the 'Other's' space, leaving a mark on female bodies in order to exert control over them and desexualize them (Mostov 2000). Likewise, in the song Emma, the determination to sleep with Emma is not for sexual pleasure but 'feminising' her. Such motives create an impression that 'real men' can use their sexual organs to cure women of whatever ails them. This can also be linked to one of the rape myths talked about in Zimbabwean society 'it would do some women good to get raped' or 'she just needs a good man (heterosexual sex, whether consensual or not) to sort her out'.

Bertone and Camoletto (2009) contend that men often find it 'natural' to confirm their masculinity through sexual exploits. For instance, the song below further demonstrates male desire to deploy sexual intercourse as a tool to control women. In the song, a voice impersonating a male figure bemoans 'wayward' behaviour by a woman, who 'defies' expectations of a woman, at least according to the understandings of what makes a woman in a patriarchal society. The lyrics of the song go:

*Musikana uyu haana kana kumbokwana* (This girl is insane)

*Simudza makumbo* (open her legs)

*Tiise danda*[i] (we penetrate)

*danda nyoro* ( unprotected penis)

This song also says something about masculinities in a Zimbabwean footballing context. There is a tendency to exaggerate the length of a black man's penis (Miller n.d). In the song, a man brags of his huge penis which is equated to *danda*-log. The assumption is that every heterosexual man, is supposed to possess a huge penis as a feature of hegemonic masculinity. In the hierarchy of masculinities (see Connell 1995), men with small penises, cannot be categorised together with those of hegemonic masculinity. There is a myth that such men are not able to penetrate women enough. This version of masculinity tends to affirm that sex is not good unless the woman is in some form of pain (Miller n.d). As alluded to earlier, the assumption is that 'real men' must be able to use their sexual organs as tools for forcing women into subordinate positions. Even beyond stadia terraces, it is common to hear men interpreting any 'deviant' behaviour (transgressing boundaries of femininity) by a woman as a reflection of sexual intercourse deficiency. "*Mukadzi uyu ane murume here?* (Does this woman have a husband?)," they often ask. At times they say: "*Murume wake haasi kumukwira bho* (Her husband is not fucking her properly)".

Songs also show that in football contexts sexual prowess and sexual exploits are celebrated as ways of performing hegemonic masculinities. This concurs with Brown's (2015) assertion that hetero-normative masculine discourse is a belief that normalizes and actually shapes many heterosexual relationships where a man's role in the relationship is dominant, which is closely tied to his sense of masculinity, commonly confirmed by his sexual prowess. For example, the song below, *ndakaboora kamusalad*[ii], testifies such a trend.

*PaJoina City*[iii] (at Joina City)

*Ndakaboora musalad* (I deflowered a 'high class girl')

*Mafish bonga* (Fish mongers)

*Ndakaboora musalad* (I deflowered a 'high class girl')

In the song, a 'virile man' brags about his sexual prowess and the ability to deflower a woman. The term *kuboora* in the song literally implies 'drilling a hole'. Deflowering a woman becomes a key definition of a hegemonic aggressive masculine man, while at the same time reducing the female body to a sexual object. Virility is a construct of masculinity (Hoffman 1977; Bucher 2014). The idea of 'drilling' or 'screwing' a woman in the song above can be linked to 'daggering' in Jamaican dancehall culture. 'Daggering' is a Jamaican slang for penetration during sexual intercourse (Rowe 2013, 248). Miller (n.d) asserts that in Jamaican dancehall culture, 'daggering dance', is an important space in which aggressive masculinities are performed. Miller (n.d) further contends that in this kind of dance, often, female bodies are just passive, receptacle and inert. They are acted on. This is in agreement with the song above which portrays a woman's vagina as a 'drilled' object in the literal sense.

Masculinities are fluid and vary. For example, on 22 October 2014 Dynamos FC beat rivals Highlanders FC 1-0 at Babourfields stadium, Bulawayo. Dynamos FC fans bragged '*Highlanders yarohwa nyoro* (Highlanders FC have been penetrated)'. However, two weeks down the line, Dynamos FC lost 0-2 to FC Platinum at Mandava stadium, Zvishavane. Dynamos FC fans who had once bragged of their virility and physical strength –key defining features of masculinity (see González-Allende 2010), were feminised. Victorious FC Platinum fans sang:

*DeMbare wakauya wega kuzorohwa nyoro* (DeMbare[iv] you consented to unprotected sex)

*Shinga DeMbare wakauya wega kuzorohwa nyoro* (Endure DeMbare you volunteered to have unprotected sex)

*DeMbare wakauya wega kuzosvirwa* (DeMbare you consented to sex)

The term *kurova* is a Shona word for beating, while *nyoro* literally means wet. However, *nyoro* has become a common metaphor in Zimbabwe for unprotected sex. Dynamos FC, representing a woman in the song is sarcastically reminded that she voluntarily consented to unprotected sex. The recurrence of *nyoro* discourse in most songs is an expression of desire for hegemonic masculinity. In martial arts, those styles whose competition rules encourage bare knuckles are regarded as more superior and macho compared to those in which gloves and other protective gear are worn. Likewise, in everyday discourse some Zimbabwean men boast of *nyoro* which they also refer to as 'livewire' or '*yekedero*' (as it is). *Nyoro*, livewire or *yekedero* signifies power since it can result in pregnancy which is akin to scoring a goal in a match. Thus for some men unprotected sex is a way of disciplining a female body.

Despite most analysed songs expressing virility and libido as key attributes of masculinity, there are some songs showing that not every man possesses these qualities. The songs show that some men are impotent and fail to satisfy their women. Men who fail to perform are labelled impotent. Male sexual dysfunction is a prevalent and distressing condition, which may be exacerbated by the sufferer's perceptions of masculinity and normative sexual behaviour (Graham 2014; Clarke,

Marks and Lykins 2015). The song Jatropha below, is an example of songs illustrating that some men fail to perform expectations of masculinity.

*Jatropha* (Jatropha)

*Ndipe zvandakavinga* (Give me what I came for)

*Handina kuvinga sadza pano* (I didn't come here for food)

*Kumba kwababa vangu ririko* (It's there at my father's house)

*Ndipe zvandakavinga* (give me what I came for)

Both male and female fans sing this song. The song's lyrics were appropriated from Zimbabwean Urban Groove musician- Dino Mudondo's song. The song impersonates a female voice and is a plea by a woman to her husband for sexual gratification since she did not marry for material things but sex. The husband is mocked as 'Jatropha', an 'unpopular' flower in Zimbabwe. This is because during the post-2000 Zimbabwe's socio-economic political crisis which resulted in shortages of basic commodities including fuel, the Zimbabwean government turned to Jatropha to tame fuel challenges. Large scale Jatropha plantations were embarked on, but no tangible results came out. Thus Jatropha is a laughing stock in Zimbabwe. The song above shames sexually underperforming men as 'Jatropha'. In heterosexual relationships, men are expected to be virile and be able to ejaculate during sexual intercourse (Graham 2014), as a confirmation of hegemonic masculinity.

**Prostitution discourse and performance of masculinities**

Scholars (Agnew 2006; Jones 2008; Chiweshe 2014) indicate that football stadiums are misogynistic. A number of songs call women by derogatory terms such as *mahure* (prostitutes). The songs create an impression that most women in stadia terraces are not 'authentic' fans, but are 'loose' and looking for men who can 'occupy' them. In a way, real women -feminine, are supposed to stay away from machismo spaces like stadia.

The discourse of prostitutes also weaves from the terraces to the pitch. Male footballers who move from one team to another are also equated to 'prostitutes'. Players who move frequently between clubs, arguably for the money, are accused for lack of 'loyalty', which is variant to expectations of hegemonic masculinity. In patriarchal heteronormative societies like Zimbabwe, men deliberately associate infidelity with women. There is a tendency of conveniently pretending as if women are the only prostitutes, exonerating men from such acts. This reflects in the song analysed below where Hebert Dick a male footballer, is accused of acting like a female prostitute. This is because Dick played for several teams in Zimbabwe (Dynamos FC, Amazulu FC, Highlanders FC, Chicken Inn FC and South Africa (Mamelodi Sundowns FC). This movement across teams is equated to prostitution and infidelity.

*Dick ihure, Dick irombe* (Dick is a prostitute, Dick is destitute)
*Dick ihure, Dick anovhurira vese* (Dick is a prostitute; Dick opens his legs for everyone)
*Dick irombe, wakatadza kutengera mukadzi wake vhara beche* (Dick is a destitute, he failed to buy his wife panties)

Theorised from Connell's (1987) internal hegemonic masculinity lens, Hebert Dick was viewed as a lesser man for failure to uphold to the imagined principles of a man. He was framed as a prostitute, a phenomenon intricately linked to the sexism of hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy. The denigration of opposition teams and players by references to prostitution is not peculiar to Zimbabwe. In the United Kingdom for example, footballers who frequently move between clubs, arguably for money are denigrated for 'lack of loyalty'. The movement for 'greener' pastures is equated to 'prostituting talent' for more money. For example, since Roman Abramovich bought and invested heavily in Chelsea FC, the club's players have often been vilified - 'Chelsea rent boys'[iv] - defining players signed by the club as male prostitutes (Lo 2014). The designation of 'rent boy' is arguably even more derogatory, carrying heteronormative disdain. This perhaps foregrounds one aspect of football songs/chanting as denigration of the opposition. We show that hegemonic masculinity is reinforced by an explicitly gendered flavour to this abuse while at the same time as the singing of this abuse feeds of hegemonically masculine tropes in its lyrics.

Importantly, in the same song, Dick is accused of failing to provide for his family or wife as expected from a responsible man-buying his wife panties. This can be located in a discussion of the changing sense of fatherhood and masculinity (Segal 2007; Granham 2014). It is argued that another important dimension to masculine identity is that of being a provider to the family. Masculinity in relation to fatherhood is demonstrated by being able to provide for the family (Granham 2014).

During expressions of hegemonic masculinity, some of the songs express desires for 'ideal' feminine bodies which sexually gratify men. But in the process, women with bodies beyond feminine expectations are insulted as prostitutes. For instance, the song, "*Hure riye rematako mahombe...randitadzisa kuisa nyoro* (that prostitute with huge buttocks prevented me from enjoying unprotected penetration) implies the size-zero image of advertising which suggests that an 'ideal' beautiful lady should be slim and slender. The song despises women with huge buttocks. We however, noted a contrast in the construction of 'ideal feminine' beautiful women. There are some songs suggesting that 'real men' prefer women with *magaro mahombe*-huge bums. For such men, huge buttocks are an important feature resembling ideal femininity and beauty. For instance, a song sung by CAPS United FC fans at Babourfields stadium, Bulawayo during a Highlanders FC/CAPS United FC match, *Tinotenda Magaro'* (We appreciate huge buttocks) confirms our observations.

> *Tinotenda magaro, tinotenda magaro (*We appreciate/ thank buttocks)
>
> *Kana tichiti* magaro (When we say buttocks)
>
> *Hatirevi tugaro* (We don't mean small buttocks)
>
> *Tinoreva magaro emuno muBhuruwayo* (We mean buttocks from Bulawayo[vi])
>
> *Saka tinotenda magaro emuno muBhuruwayo* (We thank buttocks in Bulawayo)

The song appropriates lyrics of the song *Tinotenda magamba* (we thank our national heroes), which acknowledges the contribution of Zimbabwe's liberation heroes during the country's struggle against British colonialism. In this song Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city is hailed for being home to 'ideal'-beautiful and feminine women. During such performances, female fans voluntarily go on 'stage' and energetically dance gyrating their backsides in front of

ululating male supporters. At times dancing women invite men to caress their gyrating bums, making it an exciting and entertaining performance as people consume the 'beautiful' game. Such women to an extent express desires for hegemonic masculinity. This challenges the assertion by Daimon (2010) that female fans are sexually molested against their will in Zimbabwe football stadia. This nevertheless creates an opportunity to explain the centrality of women in processes of constructing masculinities.

However, messages in some songs **s**how the varied, contradictory and multiple nature of perspectives to masculinities. There is no monolithic but multiple discourses on masculinities. For instance, the songs show multiple and contradictory narratives on prostitution. While there is a general tendency in football fandom to associate prostitution with women, the song below contradicts such a perspective.

> *Tese tiri mahure panyika pano* (Everyone is a prostitute in this world)
> *Hapana anoramba nyoro* (Everyone enjoys and wants to have unprotected sex)
> *Tese tichapera kufa, panyika pano hapana anoramba nyoro* (We shall all perish since everyone wants to have unprotected sex)

This song counters the general opinion reinforced by other songs that prostitution is confined to women. The song embraces the position that even men also engage in prostitution and are not invincible when death calls, perhaps caused by toying with unprotected sex.

## Conclusion

This paper contributes to literature on fandom, popular music masculinities and gender relations in African societies in general and Zimbabwe in particular. We complement earlier arguments on masculinities (Connell 1987, 1995, 2012) and others. Hegemonic masculinity is relevant to the exploration of gender in sporting sites. By deploying the hegemonic masculinity concept in the analysis of football fandom songs, the study illuminates on how gender inequalities are produced and reproduced in patriarchal establishments. The subject undoubtedly cries out for attention and offers insights into the jocular performance of gender in public spaces. Despite the sometimes jovial nature of these performances, there are power undercurrents involved. Fandom songs are neither confined to solidarity nor cheering athletes but speak to gender and masculinity issues in Zimbabwe, as elsewhere. This confirms the assertion by Spandler and McKeown (2012,392) that 'football is a primary space where gender is performed-not where men are men, but where men do (or don't do) being male.'

We demonstrate the assertion by (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005) that while hegemonic masculinity is often seen as a 'configuration of gender practice', it is sometimes presented as a cultural ideal or an aspiration that only limited numbers of men can practise or even can never be fulfilled. Indeed, from our analysis, for most Zimbabwe men who regularly attend matches in stadia, hegemonic masculinity is more of an expressed aspiration. The songs conflate hegemonic masculinity with heterosexuality, virility libido and *nyoro* (unprotected sex). Sexual intercourse is constructed as a tool of controlling women, forcing them into subordination. This reinforces the argument that football is a specific 'gender regime' that institutionalizes and justifies

dominant gender relations and inequalities through the reproduction of 'hegemonic masculinity (Pringle, 2005; Rowe, 1998) cited in **(**Spandler and McKeown (2012,392)**.**

Hegemonic masculinity in not a single but fluid concept. Analysed songs point towards the varied, contradictory and multiple nature of discourses on hegemonic masculinity. Even some women also have aspirations towards hegemonic masculinity. Not only women are victims of expressions of hegemonic masculinity. We have indicated cases where male footballers and clubs are victims of sexism of hegemonic masculinity and patriarchy. Such players are denigrated for 'prostituting talent' for more money by frequently moving across teams. This denigration is synonymous with the vilification of Chelsea FC and new signings in the UK, who are accused of being 'rent boys'. Finally, football fandom songs address a range of themes which however, could not be exhausted by this study. Future research on Zimbabwean football songs could focus on their intersections with political discourse, sexuality, among other issues.

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**Notes**

[1] *Danda* literally mean a log. However, in this song the term is used to refer to a huge, thick erect penis. *Kuisa danda* therefore implies penetrating with a huge erect penis.

[2] The term 'salad' is commonly used to refer to people who view themselves as elites and unique from others.

[3]Joina City is a beautiful modern shopping mall in Harare, Zimbabwe's capital city.

[4] DeMbare is a nickname for Dynamos FC

[5] The 'Chelsea rent boys' song/chant is said to have originated in the 1980s after newspapers reported that, in a dawn raid by police, a Chelsea hooligan was found in bed with a male prostitute (or 'rent boy'). Consequently, rival fans of Chelsea FC adapted the Chelsea Headhunters (a notorious hooligan firm) threatening song 'Chelsea aggro' to 'Chelsea rent boys' (Lo 2014). However, in recent times since Roman Abramovich bought and invested heavily in Chelsea, their players are seen as mercenaries who will do anything for money (**http://www.pinknews.co.uk/2014/07/17/chelsea-rent-boys-football-chant-accused-of-being-homophobic-amid-world-cup-furore/**)

[6] There is a general belief that the most beautiful ladies in Zimbabwe are found in Bulawayo.

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